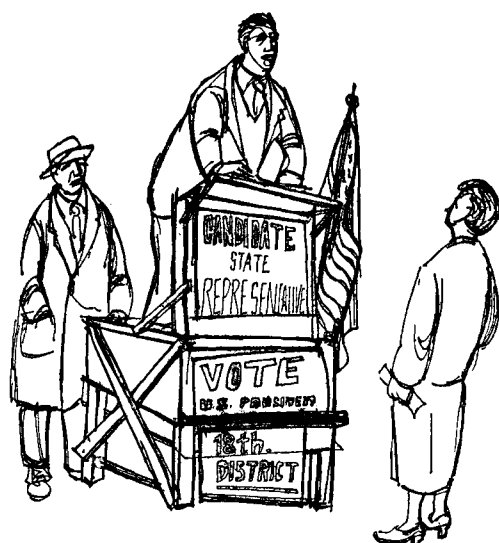


JOHN WESLEY'S LEGACY

—John M. Todd

THE
Commonweal



AFTER THE REVELATIONS

**New Communist
Line**

by Michael Harrington

DECLINE OF A PLAYWRIGHT

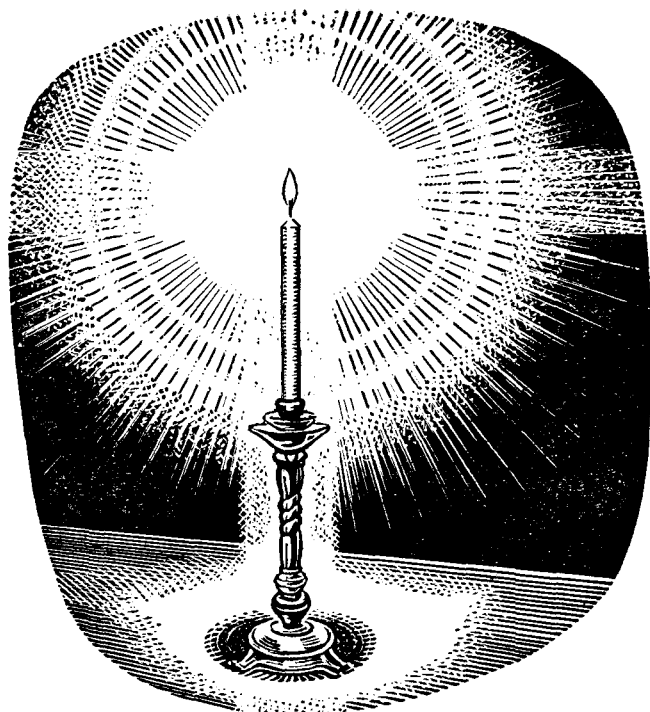
The Riddle of Sean O'Casey

by Vivian Mercier

lume LXIV, No. 15

July 13, 1956

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THE COMMONWEAL
386 FOURTH AVENUE
NEW YORK 16

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Entered as second-class matter at the post office at Orange, Conn., under the act of March 3, 1879. Published weekly, printed and copyrighted 1956 in the U. S. A. by the Commonwealth Publishing Co., Inc., 386 Fourth Ave., New York 16, N. Y., MUrray Hill 3-9685.

U. S. and Canada, \$7.50 a year. Foreign, \$9.50. Single copies 20¢.

THE Commonweal

A Weekly Review of Public Affairs, Literature, and the Arts

THIRTY-SECOND YEAR OF PUBLICATION

—week by week—

REPORT ON A REPORT

MOST READERS of this magazine know John Cogley through his writing in these pages. Last year Mr. Cogley resigned his post as executive editor to head a Fund for the Republic inquiry into the nature and extent of blacklisting in the movies, television and radio.

The project undertaken by Mr. Cogley was a large one. A staff of ten reporters and researchers under his direction spent eight months collecting facts and interviewing hundreds of persons inside and outside the industries affected. Recently, the results of the project were published in two separate volumes, one on Hollywood and one on the radio-TV industry. Because of Mr. Cogley's long connection with this magazine, it was our intention when his report was published merely to note this fact for those of our readers who might be interested. Recent developments have made us change our mind, however.

Some months ago, in a different connection, we mentioned our growing suspicion that right-wing groups and columnists were able to use some Congressional investigating bodies to serve their own particular interests. Developments in the case of Mr. Cogley's report on blacklisting strengthen that suspicion. In his findings Mr. Cogley discusses the role of certain of these right-wing columnists in determining whether or not a man is employable. What he reported seems to have been more or less of an open secret in the industries themselves, but apparently this is the first time anyone has come right out and said it in print. By what seems more than coincidence, Mr. Cogley's report had been out only three days when he received a summons from the House Un-American Activities Committee.

The circumstances surrounding the decision to call Mr. Cogley in this fashion seem far from clear. Head of the Committee is Rep. Francis Walter. To a

query by *Newsday*, Mr. Walter said: "The Committee is not passing judgment at this time on the survey's conclusions. However, we want to ask Mr. Cogley some pertinent questions which will help us evaluate the studies he has already made."

In writing this editorial, the editors of this magazine tried to reach Rep. Walter for comment, without success. A staff member of the Committee, however, told us that Mr. Cogley was being called "so he can be interrogated in executive session regarding the assertions made in the report of the Fund for the Republic on so-called blacklisting."

In a statement carried by the United Press, Rep. Walter said that the committee is not now in a position "to pass judgment on the conclusions which the Fund has reached in its survey or to ascertain what influences may have contributed to the character of its charges." (This is hardly surprising; Congressman Walter admitted to *Newsday* that he had never read the report Mr. Cogley wrote.) Then Representative Walter went on to say: "Nor can the Committee state at this point what the purposes of the Fund and Mr. Cogley truly are. It is to determine the answers to these matters that the Committee is preparing to evaluate this aspect of the Fund's work."

This seems to us a strange statement, especially coming from a man who admitted that he had not read the report because of which, supposedly, Mr. Cogley is being subpoenaed. We can tell Congressman Walter what Mr. Cogley's purpose, as he puts it, is, in this and everything else he has written: to tell the truth. And we suggest that this fact would be obvious if Mr. Walter and all others engaged in commenting on Mr. Cogley's report had read it instead of misleading news stories, the foremost of them written by a reporter who is himself named in the book.

We frankly resent the summary way in which Mr. Cogley has been treated. We resent the fact that he was not given the courtesy of an invitation rather than a subpoena. Nothing in Mr. Cogley's record as a Catholic editor and journalist of some standing justifies the cavalier treatment he has so far received.

We know Mr. Cogley well enough to know that he has nothing to fear from any inquiry, if it is honestly conducted. But aside from the discourtesy shown to him, there is involved here a serious question involving freedom of the press, and it is this with which we are particularly concerned here.

Apologists for the investigating committees justify high-handed procedures like this by saying that journalists are not specially privileged persons and must expect to be interrogated by Congress. But this statement is certainly not the whole truth. Journalists are not specially privileged in their own persons as citizens, but in the exercise of their profession they are and must be; as journalists, they are and must be entitled to unique protection from harassment. To the butcher, the baker and the candlestick-maker, this privilege may seem unfair, but it is a vital part of the American system, essential because the health of this democracy is dependent upon the workings of a free press.

What gives Congressman Walter the right to grill Mr. Cogley about what he says in his book? In discussing this point, many people cite the fact that the Fund for the Republic, which provided the money for Mr. Cogley's research, is a tax-exempt educational foundation, as if this meant that the normal safeguards against the abuse of governmental power no longer operated in such instances. But America is full of tax-exempt institutions and organizations of all kinds, engaging in charitable, religious and educational work. To say that such institutions and organizations must meet certain minimum standards or rules of behavior is reasonable enough, but this certainly should not mean that a government committee can do anything it wants to such a tax-exempt group or institution, without protest or opposition.

There are scores of books published every year which are the result of research financed by tax-exempt foundations or institutions. In the future, may authors of such books expect to be subpoenaed by Congressional committees if their findings of fact or opinions are unpopular? Will a writer who upholds the Supreme Court decision on segregation, for example, be subpoenaed and grilled by Senator Eastland? Will Keynesian economists be called to account by Congressional critics

who are anti-New Deal? In Mr. Cogley's case, his two volumes were published by the Fund itself rather than by a university press or a commercial publisher. We do not see how this fact substantially alters the case, for when Congressional committees can freely call authors of books to answer for their work, we are starting down a dangerous path.

For Mr. Cogley, a real complication may arise from the very nature of the subject he was investigating. He was able to obtain much of his material only in confidence, because some who gave him information feared the loss of their jobs if their names were used—a fact that illustrates very well the atmosphere of fear that surrounds the entire subject—and now he is under great pressure to reveal his sources. This, of course, is a familiar situation in the history of journalism, but, ironically, in Mr. Cogley's case much of the pressure to make him reveal his sources is coming from journalists who certainly know the tradition of journalism in this matter but who have themselves been named for their part in the blacklisting picture. Such conduct is clearly unbecoming in newspapermen, but if it turns out that they can actually use a Congressional committee in an effort to achieve this purpose, the whole thing is doubly scandalous. After all, the libel courts are still open to anyone who feels he has been unjustly treated by this report.

These, then, are the facts about Mr. Cogley and his two-volume report, as we see them. By the time this editorial appears, if the present schedule is adhered to, Mr. Cogley will have appeared before the House Committee. Although it should be unnecessary, we want to state publicly our complete confidence in him, as a journalist and as a man of integrity—as would anyone who knows him. We reiterate our belief that the subpoenaing of Mr. Cogley to answer questions about his book and the manner in which it was done raise the most serious Constitutional questions about the freedom of the press and the use of power by Congressional committees. We call upon members of the House of Representatives, and especially the Speaker of the House, the Hon. Sam Rayburn of Texas, to note our protest in this matter. We earnestly recommend consideration of the issues involved in this matter to the American Society of Newspaper Editors and to the American Book Publishers' Council. And we ask other editors, Catholic and non-Catholic, to follow the treatment of Mr. Cogley by the House Un-American Activities Committee with serious concern.

THUNDER ON THE RIGHT

AT A RECENT public hearing of the Senate Internal Security subcommittee, the Supreme Court was attacked by two Senators as "insolent," "willful," "irresponsible," and "pro-Communist." The occasion of this attack was the recent Supreme Court decision which limited the summary security dismissals of Government employees to those in sensitive positions; the Senators responsible for the attack on the Court were Senator Eastland and Senator McCarthy.

The Senators agreed that the Court decision "had struck a mortal blow" to Government barriers against Communist infiltration, despite the fact that officials of the Justice Department had already indicated that they have not been left bound and gagged by the decision, and can devise security measures that will adequately protect the nation's security without endangering an individual's rights.

Never ones to have much truck with the Justice Department, however, the two Senators launched their two-headed attack on the Court, using those methods which they have, unfortunately, made part of the current political scene.

Each Senator explicitly declared that he did not accuse Chief Justice Warren of being a member of the Communist Party, but they agreed that the Court "has sunk to a new low since Warren took over," that he is "a hero in the Communists' book" and that there is "something radically wrong with him." The following exchange between the two Senators is dismayingly typical of their meeting:

Senator Eastland: "The Court seems to be issuing just one pro-Communist decision after another."

Senator McCarthy: "You're so right."

Senator Eastland: "What explanation is there except that some Communist influence is working within the Court?"

Not a man to be trapped in an immoderate position, Senator McCarthy replied: "Either incompetence or the influence you mentioned."

If our time and its issues were less serious, it would be possible to pass over this performance of Senators Eastland and McCarthy by light references to Tweedledum and Tweedledee, and to note that, in this bicephalous attack, whatever was said merely went in one head and came out the other.

But our time and its issues are serious. These men are not Tweedledum and Tweedledee; they are members of the United States Senate; they are attacking the personal and professional reputation of the Chief Justice, and the integrity of the Court

itself, with an Olympian disregard for logic, facts or their own responsibility. The decisions of the Supreme Court to which these men object are "pro-Communist" only in the twisted sense that they strike at the false image of America which these two men have helped to create and which the Communists have been glad to represent abroad as though it were true.

WORKERS AND THE DAILY WORKER

THE WORKERS in Poland revolted against seemingly insurmountable odds. With linked arms they marched into the fire of machine guns. Chanting, "Bread, bread, bread!" they stormed Government buildings. They faced tanks and anti-aircraft fire. With the revolt quelled, those who remain face prisons, mass trials, a ruthless purge.

People of the free world and the subjugated people of the satellite countries must hail the event with mixed feelings. When men as brave as these rioting workers oppose themselves to the tyranny of a Communist regime, when they are so committed that they give their lives to almost certain death, their actions are above the praise of others. We can rejoice that men who desire liberty and freedom can engage in such desperate actions; but we must grieve that their conditions demand such desperate action before their voice is heard.

At a minimum, the brutal repression that the Communist regime in Poland was forced to make will embarrass the Party in its present role of a friendly, relaxed, peace-loving organization. Beyond this, the Communists will be forced to admit, not only widespread discontent, but an active underground resistance. These Polish workers, like the East Germans who rebelled in 1953, will help to nourish the desire for liberty and the hope that it can be attained.

This revolt must be attributed, at least in part, to the condemnation of Stalin and the present ferment within international Communism. Recognizing this, it is ironic that one of the severest comments on the situation in Poland was made, all unwittingly, by the American *Daily Worker* for July 1. In this issue there appears a cartoon that was intended to comment on present conditions within the United States. Seated at a desk is, in Communist jargon, a bloated capitalist. Behind him is a safe that is overflowing with bags of money; facing him is a clean-cut worker holding a newspaper that announces higher food prices. The caption under the picture is the supposed statement of the capitalist:

"Our country facing its most critical period and you worry about an insignificant thing like eating!"

The analogy is almost perfect. For the Polish workers expressed their demands in terms of living conditions, and they chanted as they marched to their death the simple cry of "Bread, bread, bread!" The counterpart of the capitalist is less compelling, for the words of the spokesman for the Communist regime in Poland were not so gentle. "Everyone who raises his hand against the people," said Polish Premier Josef Cyrankiewicz, "may be sure it will be hacked off in the interest of the working class, in the interest of raising our standard of living and in the interest of the fatherland." Explaining how workers are helped by having their hands hacked off will add new troubles to Communist leaders and will make even less certain those whose faith in the Party has been shaken. If the Polish workers had accomplished nothing else, for this we would be grateful.

RACE AND POLITICS

THE NATIONAL Association for the Advancement of Colored People has recently served notice of its increasing strength as a political factor to both the Democratic and Republican Parties. Addressing the annual convention of the NAACP, its special counsel, Mr. Thurgood Marshall, asked the delegates to make a clear appraisal of the "action and inaction" of both major parties in the field of civil rights legislation. Several days later, the executive secretary of the NAACP, Mr. Roy Wilkins, indicated that the record of both parties showed them leaning rather heavily toward "inaction" where civil rights legislation was concerned.

After scoring the Eisenhower Administration for playing a "neutral role" on the issue of school segregation, and remaining neutral while the Supreme Court was attacked for its ruling, Mr. Wilkins arraigned both parties by pointing out that "the record shows that neither party has passed a single civil rights bill—not the Republicans when they controlled the Eighty-third Congress, and not the Democrats thus far in their control of the Eighty-fourth Congress. . ."

Against this background of "neutralism" and "inaction" on civil rights, Mr. Wilkins called specifically for each party to pledge affirmative action to see that the Supreme Court's decision on desegregation be made effective, that prompt beginnings in good faith be made toward school desegregation, and that the executive and legislative

powers of the government be pledged to this end. Above all, indicated Mr. Wilkins, both parties must write campaign planks which go far beyond their 1952 positions on civil rights, "because much has happened since 1952."

One of the most significant things that has happened since 1952 is well represented by Mr. Wilkins' direct challenge to both the major political parties. In the aftermath of the historic Supreme Court decision striking down the doctrine of "separate but equal," the American Negroes have shown a marked capacity for effective political action, as in the Montgomery boycott on the one hand, and, on the other, by their willingness and ability to use judicial processes to define and enlarge the scope of their rights as citizens. The additional fact, epitomized by Mr. Wilkins' calling upon the Negro to vote "without stammer or apology" in behalf of his civil rights, will be welcomed by everyone who values this nation's electoral processes.

AID TO TITO

THE RECENT return of Marshall Tito to the Soviet fold raises some serious questions affecting the future relations of this country to Yugoslavia. In fact, many voices have been raised in this country denouncing Tito's "redefection," and demanding that, in reprisal, his country be cut off from all future aid from the United States. To bolster their argument, the opponents of aid to Yugoslavia rehearsed his political shortcomings and past acts of tyranny as well as his present "perfidy."

Despite all this, the Administration decided not to cut Tito off from further funds; the Senate supported the Administration's view, voted the appropriation for Tito, but counseled the Administration to study the situation before recommending additional aid for Yugoslavia next year.

Both of these decisions represent, in this case, the direction of political wisdom. Aid was not given to Tito to reward him for his break with Stalinism, nor as this country's sign of approval for each of his domestic policies. It was and is being given in the hope that it will somehow strengthen his hand, and therefore ours, in dealing with the Soviet. The money is, in short, a gamble. It has paid off in the past to the extent that it has seemingly enabled Tito to wrest a certain measure of independence from Russian control and thereby weaken the Soviet monolith. A year's study of the gamble involved in this year's appropriation will enable us to see whether the gamble would pay off again.

New Communist Line

"THIS TIME, THE AMERICAN COMMUNISTS SAY, WE ARE NOT WHAT WE HAVE ALWAYS BEEN IN THE PAST; THIS TIME WE ARE REALLY INDEPENDENT"

MICHAEL HARRINGTON

SOME TWENTY years ago, the mood of a decade was defined by a coalition of liberals, socialists and Communists—by the Popular Front. This was the period of the Blum Government in France, of the civil war in Spain, of the slogan of collective security. It was at this time that Russia began to emerge as one of the most reactionary states in history; and indeed, the knowledge of that fact was hastened by the betrayals of the Stalinists within the Popular Front itself. A terrible, one would think a decisive, lesson was learned: that it is impossible for democrats to cooperate with the Communist Party or its front groups.

Today, all of the terrible knowledge about Stalinism which began to accumulate in the thirties is authoritatively documented by Stalin's heirs. And at the very same time, the Popular Front is back. This is how Eugene Dennis, National Secretary of the American Communist Party, described the line to the Party's National Committee at the end of April: "At the very heart of the problem lies the question of taking full advantage of the new and favorable trends and regroupings now beginning to unfold in the merged labor movement, in liberal and social democratic circles, in the broad and loose peace movement . . . all of which open up new and greater opportunities for promoting united action and for crystallizing broad democratic movements and coalitions."

This new line, announced by Nikita Khrushchev at the Twentieth Party Congress as the culmination of over three years of change, is complicated when it is put into the context of recent developments in Stalinism. To understand its implications, it is necessary to bear in mind two apparently opposed propositions: there have been changes, significant changes, in Stalinism since Stalin's death; these shifts, however, have not transformed the fundamental nature of Russian society or the nature of the various Communist Parties. In political terms, cooperation with Communists remains as impossible as ever.

The reasons for this are found in the nature of the

Communist Parties. They are the agents of international Stalinism, more specifically, of the Russian totalitarianism which leads the world Stalinist movement.

IT IS not difficult to document this analysis with regard to the past. The Communists have been doing exactly this for some months now. A consistent "self-criticism" of the Communist Parties outside of Russia—in Togliatti's speech to the Italian Party, in the American Party's statement of June 24—has been the admission of their subservience to Moscow. This subservience has always been expressed by the fact that the Communist Parties outside of Russia shifted their line and tactics, not as a response to the conditions in their own countries, but as an answer to the demands of the Russian Party.

This fact the Communists have always tried to obscure. They have argued for each new line as if it occurred to them from an objective examination of local conditions. Thus, Eugene Dennis, in the section quoted, bases himself on "new and favorable trends and regroupings" in America, which is the flimsiest sort of cover for the obvious point that his new consciousness of the situation in the United States coincided exactly with the announcements of the Twentieth Party Congress.

In exactly the same manner the American Communist Party discovered in the mid-thirties (when the Comintern announced the first Popular Front) that Roosevelt was not a fascist but a democrat, only to learn a few years later (immediately after the Hitler-Stalin pact) that he was a warmonger. It then had to correct this impression (right after the invasion of Russia) and become the most uncritical and toadying element in the Roosevelt coalition during the World War II period. This point may seem obvious but it is of great importance to understand that an argument with Stalinists is never about America; it is always about Russia. The American *Daily Worker* has more or less admitted that this was true in the past, but it argues that a real change has taken place now. This time, they say, we are not what we have always been

Mr. Harrington writes frequently for this and other magazines on political and cultural matters.

in the past; this time we are really independent, responsible only to ourselves.

THE ONE asset which is shared by all Communist Parties is their identification with the October Revolution. That this Revolution became a totalitarian nightmare is not understood by millions throughout the world. Moscow, for them, remains the inheritor of the traditions of revolutionary Marxism, the pre-eminent spokesman for the oppressed throughout the world, the concrete embodiment of hope itself. In Italy and France, this tragic illusion has permeated the entire working-class and is a tremendous source of strength to Thorez and Togliatti. In America, this illusion is not so pervasive, yet it is sufficiently present to be exploited by the Communist Party.

The British Party may send a series of questions off to Moscow; the Italians may storm about this or that point in Khrushchev's speech; the Americans may "demand" that the Kremlin explain Stalinist anti-Semitism. But there is a decisive limit. No Communist Party in the world can challenge Moscow on any basic point. It is a fundamental question of self-interest.

The leaders of the Parties outside of Russia owe their position to one fact: they have repeatedly demonstrated their subservience to Moscow. They went along, for example, with the expulsion of the Lovestonite majority in America; they murdered Trotskyists in Spain; they were willing to cooperate with Nazis in Paris between May and June of 1940. These leaders are a tried and tested cadre who have risen to their positions because they did what they were told, no matter how monstrous was the action.

They are also men who see the road to power, not in the revolutionary struggle of the masses, but in the expansion of Stalinist imperialism. They have chosen. Their interest is the interest of the Russian bureaucracy and their "socialism" is the road to totalitarianism. Their Parties are so tightly bound to Moscow that they quite literally *cannot* be transformed. It is their very nature to be dedicated to subordinating all else to the demands of Stalinist imperialism.

This should make it clear enough that the changes which have taken place since the Twentieth Party Congress are not fundamental. They cannot be. A basic, democratic political axiom remains unchanged: political cooperation with Communists is impossible. Nevertheless, the changes which have taken place within Stalinist institutions may well make this Popular Front line all the more seductive.

EUGENE DENNIS' report to the National Committee of the American Party indicates the direction of the new line. Its tone is one of reasonable-

ness, moderation. All kinds of past mistakes are admitted. Perhaps the Progressive Party shouldn't have been formed. Communists should not have been so intransigent in the CIO and courted their expulsion. And the "peace movement" was too narrow. The examples accumulate. "Left Sectarianism," the apparent radicalism with which the American Communists used to disguise their subservience to Stalin, is now condemned; moderation, an apparent liberalism with which the American Communists now disguise their subservience to Khrushchev, is on the order of the day.

As usual, the villains of the past are being rehabilitated. Walter Reuther, a *bête noire* of American Stalinists ever since he beat them to a fare-thee-well in the UAW, is now regarded as a peace-loving progressive. Claude Lightfoot, the Party leader who reported to the National Committee on electoral activity, even had kind words for Americans for Democratic Action, an organization whose very existence developed out of its anti-Stalinism. And coupled with these admissions and shifts in judgment about America are the *Daily Worker* editorials "demanding" that Khrushchev explain himself on this or that point.

The "theoretical" capstone of this edifice is the thesis about the "peaceful and democratic road to socialism." For Dennis, the enemy is no longer the capitalist class, the bourgeoisie; it is now the "trusts," the "economic royalists," etc. The Party, in throwing its net as wide as possible, in turning toward "popular forces," is already toning down its Marxist rhetoric and will now seek to work in every kind of organization. The Progressive Party has been in the process of being liquidated by the Communists for some three or four years now, and, in November, the Party will once more attempt to act as a part of the Democratic Party. The various "dual institutions," such as the Civil Rights Congress, are being junked, and the Stalinists are now going to attempt to function within organizations like the NAACP and the ACLU. In other words, although the fundamental character of the American Communist Party has not changed, the shifts which have taken place are of such a nature as to make the new Popular Front line a difficult one to handle.

IN AMERICA, the Popular Front presents a particular kind of problem. There is little or no question here of any organizational agreement between the Communist Party and groupings in the liberal-labor movement. It is rather a case of individual Party members, and Party groups, entering established organizations to push for their new line. It is crucial that we understand how to oppose them.

The American liberal-labor movement paid a high cost for its illusions about Stalinism during the Popular

Front of the thirties and World War II. One consequence was a guilt complex which has been expressed ideologically by writers like Diana Trilling and Leslie Fiedler. But politically, the results were much more important. Attacked by the right-wing as being "soft on Communism," the leadership of the American liberals embarked on a program of proving a dubious contrary, that they could be as "hard" on Communism as the right-wingers. Thus Mr. Truman could make an election boast about the Smith Act, remarking, "I put my Reds in jail," and Adlai Stevenson could accept this position in 1952. The climax came with the law outlawing Communism, which was sponsored by Hubert Humphrey in 1954.

At the same time that official liberalism was retreating on the civil liberties front, its program of *political* opposition to Stalinism internationally receded into the background. The emphasis on Point Four became a ritualistic incantation, an expendable in the liberal program which was actually considered utopian. In the main, the liberals supported the increasing militarization of America's struggle against Stalinism, with all of the reactionary consequences that implied, the alliances with the Bao Dai's, the Franco's, the Chiang's.

The point is that in the crucial decade of the development of the Cold War and the witch-hunt, American liberalism did not formulate a realistic political program of opposition to Stalinism. Domestically, they were bedeviled by an uneasy conscience; internationally, they went along with the main drift, and their criticism became increasingly rhetorical and ceremonial. Such an immediate past hardly prepares the liberal for the difficult and necessary task which he faces today: the need to fight the Popular Front line *democratically*.

Certainly there is no violation of civil liberties in excluding anti-democrats like the Stalinists from voluntary, democratic organizations. But the manner of such exclusion may become a private loyalty system, which is undemocratic. But even assuming that this can be done democratically, it will still not solve

the problem, for many an American Communist will simply not be identifiable as such. And, therefore, a broader approach must be made.

THIS APPROACH will demand a principled, democratic anti-Stalinism on a political basis. On the one hand, that means opposition to all the self-defeating, undemocratic forms of anti-Stalinism, such as the notion that the way to deal with anti-libertarian Stalinists is to infringe upon their (and everyone else's) civil liberties. But as long as the liberal-labor movement is identified with anti-Stalinism of the Humphrey Act variety, it is vulnerable to attack from within by Stalinists posing as victimized democrats. (For they have been victimized although they are never democrats.)

Thus, paradoxical as it may seem, an important step in the political opposition to Stalinism in America today is a principled defense of the rights of Stalinists. Support of the buck-shot technique, as Herbert Philbrick noted, actually provides a cover for the Stalinist.

A corollary of this domestic, civil liberties approach is the necessity for the liberal movement to formulate a political opposition to Stalinism internationally. Here again, it can be positive only if it opposes self-defeating anti-Stalinism, for example, support of the French in a disgraceful, and lost, cause in Indochina; support of the French in the same kind of a cause in North Africa today. And the positive aspect of this is a political program for a democratic international opposition to Stalinism in terms of aid to the colonial peoples, the rejection of reactionary alliances and the like. One might sum up this point: take Walter Reuther's rhetoric seriously, and expand it.

Finally, every point in such an approach must make it clear that anti-Stalinism is simply the other side of democracy's coin. Any lingering illusions that Stalinism is irrelevant to civil liberties, to the labor movement, to the Negro struggle, that it is really only a foreign phenomenon, must be dispelled. We are dealing with a movement which is based upon the most reactionary, anti-democratic social system in the world today. And supporters of that system can rightfully be asked what they mean by "civil liberties" when they back the repression of freedom throughout the Stalinist world.

The task of democrats in dealing with the new Popular Front line today is difficult. They must realize that the fundamental nature of Stalinism and of the Stalinist Parties has not changed; but that the shift within that basic structure may well make the new Party line all the more seductive. In fighting Stalinism politically, positively, they must put forward a democratic program of opposition to Stalinism, one that will prevent a repetition of the tragedy of the thirties.



The Riddle of Sean O'Casey

VIVIAN MERCIER

PEOPLE OFTEN ask, "What happened to O'Casey?" meaning, "What caused him to start writing rubbish after those three plays of genius?" *The Shadow of a Gunman*, *Juno and the Paycock*, *The Plough and the Stars*, first performed in 1923, 1924 and 1926 respectively, were a crescendo of achievement that any dramatist could be proud of. Then came the refusal of *The Silver Tassie* in 1928 by the Abbey, O'Casey's break with that theatre, and a fairly steady decline in his powers as a playwright. No doubt his ranting, rollicking, griping, grieving, Joyce-and-water autobiography—six volumes to date—has won new readers for his plays, which sell well enough in a four-volume collected edition, but no play since the original trio has won unambiguous success on the world stage—not even, I think, in Moscow.

Dublin, longing for its own little Bacon-Marlowe-Shakespeare act, trots out some uncharitable answers: "Sure, Lady Gregory wrote all his early plays for him," or "He was going with a school-teacher and she helped him until they fell out." I have actually heard both these suggestions within the past week, but I don't take them very seriously. (There is something in the Lady Gregory hint, however, as we shall see.) Another stock Dublin line which makes some sense is the "he-shud-never-a-gone-t'England" one. Presumably the stock answer in America is "The Communists got him," though why he should be thought more of a Communist in his well-heeled age than in his poverty-stunted youth passes my understanding.

After reading and re-reading Sean O'Casey in quantity for a solid week, I am tempted to ask, "What happened to O'Casey?" with quite a different emphasis. In view of all the formless, tasteless, wordy and sentimental rubbish that he has written before and since, how did he ever produce those three works of authentic genius?

Naturally, this is the unanswerable question about any author of any masterpiece; unable to solve the problem, we fall back on theories of divine inspiration, neurotic compulsion, the *Zeitgeist*, etc. Many forces were undoubtedly at work on—and in—O'Casey during the seven years (1916-23) which elapsed, accord-

ing to what he told Lady Gregory, between his determining to have a play put on at the Abbey and the fulfillment of his ambition. In the Easter Rising of 1916 many of his former Irish Citizen Army comrades met their deaths for a cause that he believed had little to do with the Socialism which they and he professed. Nevertheless, he must have felt a burden of guilt at having done nothing to help them. The death of his mother, with whom he had lived all his life, and whose last years he had made as comfortable as he could, took place in 1919. This must inevitably have increased his burden of guilt, even though—perhaps *because*—it was a liberation as well as a deprivation.

A WHOLE series of stirring and depressing events followed 1916 in Ireland: the anti-conscription agitation, the election victory of Sinn Féin, the guerrilla warfare between Irish and British, the 1921 Treaty which set up the Irish Free State, the bitter Irish Civil War. In some of these struggles O'Casey was actively involved as a propagandist. He wrote anti-conscription street ballads; he issued a pamphlet on the death of his fellow-stalwart of the labor movement, Thomas Ashe, who died as the result of forcible feeding during a prison hunger strike; he compiled the first, though admittedly sketchy, history of the Irish Citizen Army.

Any Irishman could testify that these struggles had real effect. When I was small, I used to think that all barefoot children—and I saw many every day—were Catholics. I was probably correct in this socio-religious observation. Today there are almost no barefoot children in Ireland, of any persuasion. Some of the credit for this must go to O'Casey and the other pioneer trade unionists and Socialists who shared his moral courage. The modified welfare state which is the Irish Republic today—a state where trade-union leaders act as cabinet ministers in the inter-party government—is a far cry from the scabbing and police brutality of the great Dublin strike of 1913. It is clear that events in the national life and in O'Casey's private life thus conspired to sharpen that view of his fellow men—one part compassion and two parts satire—which stamps its hallmark on the three great early plays.

Mr. Mercier, a faculty member at the College of the City of New York and co-editor of *1000 Years of Irish Prose*, is now in Ireland.

WE MUST remember, furthermore, that the theatre to which he submitted his plays was then the world's greatest training-ground for dramatists—something it has long since ceased to be. W. B. Yeats, still in his prime, dominated the Abbey Theatre, abetted by the most skillful “play doctor” of the century, Lady Gregory, who had hammered almost all Yeats’ plays into shape. The young Lennox Robinson, most versatile of all Abbey dramatists, though lacking the power of an O’Casey, well deserved to round out such a triumvirate. They gave O’Casey the best possible advice, aided by a company who were masters of Dublin mannerisms and dialect as they could never be of Synge’s poetic country speech; I doubt if any great Abbey actor or actress in O’Casey’s generation was not a Dubliner.

In rejecting one of the numerous unperformed plays written by O’Casey before *Shadow of a Gunman*, Lady Gregory told him that his strong point was characterization; Yeats constantly advised him to write only about what he had directly experienced. Much of the story of O’Casey’s literary apprenticeship can be read in *Lady Gregory’s Journals 1916-1930*, where we find Yeats remarking: “Casey was bad in writing of the vices of the rich [in a rejected play] which he knows nothing about, but he thoroughly understands the vices of the poor.” The Abbey directors offered praise as well as adverse criticism. Of one scene in *Plough* we find them saying that “the dialogue would have to be greatly modified in rehearsal,” but they remark that another scene “as a whole is admirable, one of the finest O’Casey has written.” So far are they from wishing to “doctor” the death of Bessie Burgess that they comment, “The scene is magnificent and we are loath to lose a word of it.”

Nevertheless, the adverse criticisms and Yeats’ rather patronizing tone must have aroused unconscious—or even conscious—hostility in O’Casey, a hostility which became overt during the *Silver Tassie* row and never entirely subsided, if one is to judge by the tone of *Inishfallen Fare Thee Well*, the relevant volume of the autobiography. Undoubtedly the row, in turn, had a great deal to do with O’Casey’s unwise decision to settle permanently in England, away from his true material.

NO INDIVIDUALIST likes to be labeled and classified, but O’Casey, as a Marxist, may perhaps forgive me if I attempt a little Marxian analysis of him. His class background, I think, helps to explain and even justify his extreme touchiness in the *Tassie* affair, not to mention his lifelong sympathy with Socialism and Communism. An Irishman, asked to characterize O’Casey’s class background, could do so in three words: “a poor Protestant.” The termin-

ology might horrify Marx or Engels, but everybody in Ireland would know what it meant. In the Ireland of O’Casey’s youth, or even of mine, the phrase was equivalent to “poor white” in the Southern United States.

The poor Protestant—such as Bessie Burgess—had and has a difficult role in Ireland. Centuries of “Protestant ascendancy” are implicit and explicit in his upbringing, so that he grows up convinced that he is a member of a *Herrenvolk*. Consciously or unconsciously he becomes familiar with the Calvinist view that worldly wealth and membership of the Elect tend to go hand in hand. He finds it far harder than his Catholic fellow countryman to distinguish between respectability and a state of grace. If he, like many better-off Protestants, is unable to make the distinction, there are three courses open to him. He may sink into despair; he may fight his way grimly back into the middle classes, trading on his Protestantism whenever he can; or he may rebel against this whole money-and-prestige-ridden travesty of Christianity by identifying himself with the working class. This last was the choice Sean O’Casey made, and it does him honor.

Even so, the “poor Protestant” will never be quite at home with his Catholic fellow workers. His *Herrenvolk* attitude makes him critical and impatient of much that they take for granted. He has been brought up to regard much of the practice of their religion as barbarous superstition. At the back of his mind lurks the whole litany of anti-Irish propaganda: the Catholic Irish, he has been told so often, are lazy, dirty, drunken, lying spendthrifts. He knows by heart all the accusations habitually levelled by colonists and slaveowners against colonized peoples and slaves.

On the other hand, his nature must be noble indeed not to feel envy of the middle classes—to which, he cannot help thinking, it was his birthright to belong. O’Casey was peculiarly alert, during all his early struggles, to snubs from fellow Protestants. This fact may explain his hostility to Arthur Griffith, Bulmer Hobson, Constance Markievicz, A. E., Yeats, Robinson. In his opinion, only Lady Gregory, Bernard Shaw,



and the Reverend E. M. Griffin among his co-religionists consistently treated him as an equal.

NO WONDER O'Casey always seems to have a chip on his shoulder when he writes. No wonder, too, that he became a great satirist, casting a pitiless eye on both the workers and the middle class. What is wonderful is the deep compassion with which he can suddenly illumine the victims of his satire. Yet it is partly this very compassion which has undone him as an artist. Analyzing the basic weakness of *The Silver Tassie*, Lady Gregory wrote in her journal: "... the characters, . . . vivid in the first act, become lay figures, lantern slides, showing the horror of war."

Over and over again in his later plays O'Casey has striven to create a proletarian hero, presented without irony, who will sum up all the virtues of the working class; except for Ayamonn in *Red Roses for Me*, he has failed to create one that we can remember, much less believe in. Satire and irony he finds indispensable tools for the delineation of character. Even his mother-heroine, Juno, exposes herself to our ridicule at times, while Minnie in *The Shadow of a Gunman* and Bessie Burgess in *The Plough and the Stars* are figures of fun until their moment of truth arrives.

If we look into O'Casey's earliest separate publications—three little pamphlets of songs "humorous and sentimental" to familiar tunes, we find the same characteristics. The humorous political songs always have some satirical edge to them, but the sentimental ones are just that. The fantastically inept lyrical outbursts in his later plays, far inferior in style and dramatic appropriateness to all but the worst lyrics of the worst musical comedies, reach about the same level as his early sentimental songs. The frustrated lyric poet in O'Casey has prompted some of his unhappiest dramatic flights.

Lady Gregory always regretted the rejection of *The Silver Tassie*, and she was right. If the Abbey had done it in 1928, instead of seven years later, the reactions of the Dublin audience might have helped O'Casey to see that he was on the wrong track. At any rate, he would not have cut himself off from Dublin and from the technical advice of other Irish dramatists as completely as he did.

NOT ALL O'Casey's later plays are so embarrassingly bad as that class-conscious, rural musical, *Purple Dust*, or that attempt to combine pro-Soviet and pro-British chauvinism, *Oak Leaves and Lavender*—surely the most bloodthirsty play ever written by a congenital pacifist.

Red Roses for Me I consider to be O'Casey's best since *Plough*. It very nearly brings off the blend of

satire and poetry which he has sought for so long. Writing the autobiography must have put him in touch once more with his youth, for the play has very obvious links with the volumes *Pictures in the Hallway* and *Drums Under the Windows*.

I have faith, too, in the dramatic possibilities of *Cock-a-doodle Dandy*, with its symbolic giant rooster and its frank air of fantasy. But for all the play's high spirits, we encounter in it two faults common to almost all the later dramatic work—absence of genuine conflict and lack of logical development. At one point a dissolute character is introduced merely so that he can defy the parish priest, who kills him with a single angry blow a few speeches later. The whole extraordinary episode is never once referred to again in the remainder of the play. Such an incident did occur in Ireland some years ago—like a true Irish Protestant, I have the clipping filed away—but O'Casey totally fails to integrate it into his play.

Construction has never been O'Casey's strong suit as a playwright; even in his best plays, he likes to linger over his characters and their humorous bickerings, leaving the plot at a standstill. In fact, his plot always develops in a series of kangaroo leaps—improbable or melodramatic incidents, breathtaking shifts of mood. We should never forget that the two great dramatic influences on his youth were Shakespeare and Boucicault. The Irish extravaganzas of the latter will go to almost any lengths for a laugh or a melodramatic effect; whenever O'Casey's characters start mouthing shoddy rhetoric, we can safely blame much of it on Boucicault; nevertheless, Boucicault represents the Shakespeare tradition, however decadently, and his effect on O'Casey was not entirely deplorable. As O'Casey jolts us dizzily from comedy to tragedy and back again, we realize that his slum plays still exemplify the grand manner. I can well understand why my parents, having chosen *Hamlet* for my first straight play, decided on *Juno and the Paycock* for my second. Barry Fitzgerald was still with the Abbey then, but he was only one among a great cast, which included F. J. McCormick, Eileen Crowe, and Maureen Delany.

People complain that the Abbey audience now laughs all the way through O'Casey, but recently, just as when I first heard the words twenty-five years ago, there was a breathless silence for Mrs. Tancred's great speech, and—amazingly—one more breathless still for Juno's reprise of it in the last act: "Sacred Heart of the Crucified Jesus, take away our hearts o' stone an' give us hearts o' flesh! Take away this murderin' hate an' give us Thine own eternal love!" Rhetoric those words may be, but it is rhetoric well within the compass of the characters who deliver it and appropriate to the situation within the play. We may laugh at O'Casey's characters, but he forces us to weep with them.

John Wesley's Legacy

JOHN M. TODD

THE EMINENT Catholic theologian, Father Louis Bouyer, has recently remarked that an exposition of the Catholic theology of the episcopacy would be extremely valuable at the present day. This remark has a special significance in the light of the current religious situation in England, where the Methodists have begun a series of ecumenical talks with the Anglicans.

The first suggestion for these talks came from the Archbishop of Canterbury, who, in his now-famous Cambridge sermon of 1946, invited the non-episcopalian churches to take episcopacy into their own systems and "to try it on their own grounds." The Archbishop kept repeating his invitation, and the current ecumenical talks between the Methodists and the Anglicans are the result. These talks are unrestricted in scope, but a correspondent of the *London Times* said recently that "the doctrine and practice of episcopacy is certain to be the focal point of all discussions."

How surprised the first followers of John and Charles Wesley would have been if they could have seen where their little religious society was going. They would have been shocked to know of their direct descendants, working in America under bishops not recognized by their Mother Church, working in England without bishops and even finding the principle of episcopacy the greatest stumbling block in the movement for reunion with the Mother Church.

IN ORDER to see the problem clearly—and to see the value of Father Bouyer's statement—English Methodists must be seen in the light of their own history. Bible-moths, Biblists, Followers of Perfection, Enthusiasts, Sacramentarians, Reformed Club, Holy Company, Saints' Club—a whole thesaurus of nouns was thrown up and set aside before "Methodist" was hit on. Of all the names it was perhaps the least suitable to describe the little group of serious minded young men at Oxford in 1730. And the name still does less than justice to the great body of Christians who go under it.

The name "Methodist" was little more than a re-

Mr. Todd, author of *Catholicism and the Ecumenical Movement*, is currently writing a book on John Wesley.

flection of the eighteenth century, wedded to logic and method. It was almost a back-handed compliment. "That," said the old professors and the young undergraduates, "that must be the trouble with these new-fangled religious people: they think they've found the true and only religious *method*." The description was far from the truth. The "Wesleyans" lived indeed in the eighteenth century and expressed themselves accordingly. John Wesley himself was ever a model of order, even a follower of time-and-motion study before his day. His spiritual progress was faithfully recorded day by day in cipher in a private notebook. Whenever he had wasted so much as five minutes it was faithfully noted and entered on the debit side. But the life of his little society was neither rationalistic nor merely methodical. Its members were, after all, fervent Anglicans, a sort of religious order within the national church.

THE OTHER nick-names help us better understand the Wesleyans. They did read their Bibles assiduously—Charles Wesley's seven thousand hymns are simply a tissue of Biblical phrases. They attended the sacraments frequently. They aimed deliberately at a high religious standard, cultivating a life both of prayer and charity. They returned to the practices of the early Church, such as triple immersion for Baptism, and strict and long fasts. They wanted to be saints, and inspiring all of their religious activities was a vivid faith in Christ.

Even their "method" was, in fact, thoroughly Catholic. Their faith, rooted in a great reverence for the Word of God, the practice of inward prayer, and assistance at the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, remains the mark of Methodism today in England. But of course it is something more. Wherever there are Methodists there are good works. In England the phrase, "Nonconformist Conscience," while evoking a certain puritanism and love of severity for its own sake, a distrust of any sort of gambling, a rigid attitude towards Sunday observance, also indicates a faith which has been truly practical, and has battled against injustice and slavery of all kinds from Wesley's day to our own.

During the first forty years of this century, the

Methodists declined in numbers, along with all other religious bodies in England except the Catholics. In the last fifteen years however the numbers have tended to be constant. Today the Methodist tradition has behind it perhaps a quarter of the Church-going public, a little less than each of the two other big bodies, the Anglicans and the Catholics, who are about equal. To the ecumenical talks with the Anglicans they come, then, with an evangelical tradition of strong personal faith and strict if somewhat emotional moral and spiritual values.

And what does the Anglican Church bring which the English Methodists have not? The answer is the occasion of major difficulties: bishops. But what are bishops? How is Christian Episcopacy defined? The question is relevant not only to England, but to America, for on the answer to it depends the refusal of the American Episcopalian Church to recognize the Methodist bishops. And the answer is also bound to interest Catholics, because on the answer to this question also depends the ultimate differences between Catholic and non-Catholic. If there are bishops, must there be a Chief Bishop? If there is a Chief Bishop, must he command, as the Pope does, the allegiance of all men in a body which is supra-national, requiring obedience on ultimate moral issues and upon the questions of faith?

This is not the place to discuss whether Wesley intended to consecrate bishops when he appointed Dr. Thomas Coke and Mr. Francis Asbury as superintendents for America, nor to discuss whether, according to Anglican doctrine, he had the power to do it. In England, Methodists are faced simply with the somewhat absurd situation that although Wesley manifestly believed bishops to be an essential part of church order, yet Methodists are organized apart from the bishops of their Mother Church, and with no bishops of their own. And yet such is the power of tradition that they will hardly accept bishops again without a clarification of what the Anglicans gain from having them. And they will want to see what John Wesley himself believed.

HERE WE are faced with the fact that Wesley's whole approach is a traditional Catholic approach. Taken one by one, all his doctrines add up to the ancient orthodoxy. He believed unconditionally in the divinity of Christ, in the Virgin Birth, in the bodily Resurrection. He never finally made his mind up about the nature of the organized Church on earth; and he came to think it impossible on historical grounds to prove the historic succession of bishops at Rome claimed by the Catholic Church. But in essence he held to the traditional Catholic attitude to bishops. Otherwise he would certainly have yielded to the

provocation of his followers and his own genius to strike out on his own, independently of the Anglican bishops. But in fact he ever referred to his own ordination at Lincoln College, Oxford, as giving him the right to minister; he did not rely on a purely subjective prompting by the Holy Spirit as justification for his religious leadership.

It is also worth noting that Wesley was markedly tolerant towards Catholicism, in sharp contrast to the rabid bigotry of his contemporaries. He saw beyond the doctrinal battles to the problem of infidelity itself; he said that an overgrown zeal for Protestantism had quite swallowed up people's zeal for "our common Christianity"; anti-Catholicism was almost an "infatuation." "As bad a religion as Popery is," he noted in his Journal, "no religion at all is still worse. . . . As difficult as it is to recover a Papist, 'tis far more difficult to recover an infidel."

It is very difficult indeed to find out the limits to which an Anglican may go in his beliefs about episcopacy; certainly he is permitted to think of bishops as something quite different from the traditional Catholic guardians of faith and morals, commanding obedience. It is of course the distinguishing mark of the Anglican Church, and the source of its great contribution to the ecumenical movement, that it is exceedingly comprehensive. Typical of its attitude was a remark by the new Archbishop of York, Dr. Michael Ramsey, at his enthronement and consecration at York in April this year: "There are those who cherish liberty of thought and enquiry, and let these not doubt that they will find me their friend and sympathizer—remembering always the reminder of Mandell Creighton, that besides 'the right of the individual to be free' there is 'the duty of the institution to be something.'"

That is, perhaps, the precise point. The English Methodists are anxious to know just what this "something" is when it comes to the Anglican institution of the episcopacy. Against the background of their inquiries, an exposition of the Catholic view of the episcopacy would be, as Father Bouyer has indicated, extremely valuable.



THE SCREEN

BAD BOY

IN TELLING the story of young Rocky Graziano, "Somebody Up There Likes Me" makes no bones about the fact that he was a bad boy, a seemingly hopeless product of New York slums who drifted from protectory to reform school to prison. "Six years out of ten, I was in the can," Rocky says. As he comes out of the detention home in January of 1942, he is drafted, and then begins his own private war with the U.S. Army, which eventually lands him in Leavenworth for desertion. When a sergeant there asks him to join the boxing squad, the willful young man replies, "All my life I've been fighting, and all my life I've been getting into trouble." But about that time he begins to change, and when he gets back to civilian life again, he starts the up-hill struggle to be a fighter—a legitimate one.

In spite of the picture's grimness and plethora of seamy details, "Somebody Up There Likes Me" is a fascinating film. The particularly forceful screenplay, written by Ernest Lehman, follows the Graziano autobiography without including *all* its gore, and is greatly helped by Robert Wise's excellent direction and by Charles Schnee's fine production, with its stunning black-and-white photography of New York and of the prize fights. In his best performance to date, Paul Newman succeeds in making Rocky a tough bully in his youth and then a man of courage who commands respect in his later years. The scenes in which Rocky refuses to throw a fight and the later ones in which he refuses "to rat" on former pals who tried to bribe him are especially moving, as is Graziano's heartbreak when he is barred from fighting in New York. Pier Angeli sensitively portrays the shy, fight-hating girl who marries Rocky, and Sal Mineo gives another of his effective performances as Rocky's weak, baby-faced friend who goes completely to the dogs. Also outstanding in this large cast are Everett Sloane as Rocky's manager, Eileen Heckart as the worn-out mother to whom the troubled boy says, "Why don't you give up on me, ma," and Harold J. Stone as the father who, as a young man, gave up boxing to please his wife.

Wisely, the film ends on a triumphant New York welcome after the grueling fight in Chicago where Rocky won the middleweight championship from Zale. But "Somebody Up There Likes Me" is still a long, intensely sincere movie, and for that very reason I wish it had gone more deeply into what transformed Rocco Barbella, the East Side juvenile delinquent, into Rocky Graziano; and because of the film's title, I wish some of the religious themes of the autobio-

graphy (which Graziano wrote with Rowland Barber) had been stressed. But even as it stands, "Somebody Up There Likes Me" provides thoughtful and well-made cinema for both the sociologically interested and general movie-goer alike.

ANOTHER new film that has a prize-fighter hero is "The Leather Saint," but its story about an Episcopalian minister who trains only on Saturday mornings and fights only on Saturday nights is not to be taken seriously. The script, written by the film's producer, Norman Retchin, and its director, Alvin Ganzer, spells everything out in words of one syllable, and the acting is almost as obvious. John Derek is handsome, likable, and at times even convincing in the ring as the minister who fights incognito to pay for the iron lungs and a swimming pool for the young polio victims of his parish. His naive pastor (hammed up by Ernest Truex) is delighted with the large donations that come in every week from an unknown benefactor in the leather business. And as Derek's fight manager, Paul Douglas is equally delighted with his new boy who delivers such an effective Sunday punch (much is made of this) and wins every fight. Fight-promoter Cesar Romero is also quite pleased with the goings-on, and even when he learns the truth *after* Paul sells him Derek's contract for ten grand he does not feel too gypped. But then Romero has another interest in the whole deal because the young minister has successfully been acting like a one-man Alcoholic Anonymous with Romero's girl friend (Jody Lawrence) and has inspired her to stay on the wagon. The makers of "The Leather Saint" were not entirely unaware of "Going My Way," but unfortunately the new movie had neither Bing Crosby nor Barry Fitzgerald to help it along when the going gets too simple, as it all too frequently does.

ALTHOUGH the plot of "The Rawhide Years" is pure hokum, Director Rudolph Mate moves the episodes of this western so fast that the audience never has time to catch up with its inanities. In between the scenes of violence, however, Tony Curtis and Arthur Kennedy prove rather amusing as a couple of roving cowboys. Tony wants to clear his name of a murder charge before he settles down with the girl he left behind (Colleen Miller). Arthur wants Tony to settle down with him to a life of crime without any distractions from women. It's a good thing that Director Mate didn't take the story seriously; there are so many villains-within-villains (best is Peter Van Eyck) that one gets lost in the skulduggery. But the Technicolor is pretty.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

JULY 13, 1956

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COMMUNICATIONS

"THE ROLE OF WOMAN"

Montreal, Canada.

TO the Editors: What follows is only one reader's impressions of Father Thomas' article, "The Role of Woman" [May 18]. But they are impressions I am quite anxious to tell you about.

Most of this article dealt with the fairly obvious thesis that "modern woman is in need of direction." The other point stressed was that "woman's role is orientated around her function in the family." After indicating some difficulties of modern family life, Father Thomas writes: "To rediscover the family's significance, it is necessary to think in terms of essential human values and integral personal fulfillment." A vague generality of this nature, to my mind, doesn't go very far towards defining woman's role. The author admits that such thinking would be equally helpful in defining man's role. Such a discovery, furthermore, would be quite as likely to clear up any modern problem—juvenile delinquency, bad literature, alcoholism or what have you. And just what are "essential human values"? Does "human" here exclude the divine? Is "essential" taken in opposition to accidentals, such as beauty and sanctity? Again, what is meant by "integral personal fulfillment"? What is its specific application to woman? These strike me as some important questions the article does not answer. To say that woman's role is equivalent to rediscovering her function in the family is somewhat like saying that x equals y when both symbols remain undefined.

At this point I would like to make two observations. First, Father Thomas attempted to define woman's role in sociological terms. This is an impossibility. Secondly, I strongly disagree with his premise that "any logical discussion of woman's role in a given society . . . must start with the current interpretation of her function in the family." For the same reasons I disagree with a later version of that premise: "Once society rediscovers the significance of the family for both men and women, woman's role in the world will become clear." The author has fallen into the error of trying to define woman's role in relation to the role of something else.

I readily grant the importance both of the family and woman's place in the family. I also admit that an understanding of one can, to some extent, give an understanding of the other. But 'woman' and 'family' are two different things. Woman's role cannot be narrowed to her family function, whatever be its current interpretation. As Pius XII said, speaking of woman's role in society, "the problem resolves itself into preserving and augmenting that dignity which woman has from God." In other words, if we are to

decide the functions and rights proper to womanhood, let us do so by referring to nothing other than the ideal, the dignity and the destiny of womanhood itself. Womanhood is bigger than the family. Her role is much greater than a sociological one.

To define woman's role, therefore, necessitates an understanding of what she is, not in society or in the family or in comparison to man, but in herself. To say that man and woman are complementary is true enough. But to suggest that they can be understood only in terms of their complementarity is false. We don't get at the meaning of white by referring to some other color, but by going directly to the idea of whiteness. I have no intention here of even attempting to define the ideal of woman. In indicating that the "separateness" of the sexes is more significant than their "togetherness" or complementarity, I merely follow what the Old Testament and the early Fathers had to say on the subject. Permit me to add that woman's role is essentially a religious one. She is the more profoundly mystical sex and has been given the mission of keeping man and the world attuned to the spiritual. It is of her very womanliness that she be closer to those values of the supernatural order that give existence its true dimensions. Peter Wust wrote of woman: "Nature has designated her as the vestal of life. She is the priestess who keeps the fire of the sacred burning in the sanctuary of history. She is the guardian of the highest and purest values of the soul."

Everything in woman—the structure of her body, her qualities of intuition and beauty, her capacity for love and sacrifice and dependence—indicates that this ideal finds a kind of natural complicity with grace. It has been said that by her attitude of receptivity woman represents the religious vocation of humanity—a humanity that is open to the gift of God. Certainly it is in this sense that woman's sociological role becomes clear. She can make her greatest contribution to the building of a Christian society by bearing witness to the necessity of rebirth through submission. It will be thus that she will teach man that fundamental indigence of a creature before God; it will be thus that she will draw all the exterior activities of society into harmony with the higher ends they ought always be serving. "*Das Ewig- Weibliche zieht uns hin*," said Goethe. It is woman's role to lead us upwards.

BERNARD G. MURCHLAND, C.S.C.

Silver Spring, Md.

TO the Editors: Luckily Mother's Day had passed without more than a few jocular comments on the occasion—no tears, no flowers, no specially wrapped gin with carnations tucked into the cellophane. I *did* have a hard time getting CC to give me his Mother's Day card. He wanted to tear it up, it being fairly high quality paper.

But something was wrong. My intuition told me. It was only this morning while I was working over the french toast that I realized what was happening. *I had lost my core-function.* Lord knows where it went. It must have just slipped off into the night, gone on to another town, like Ray Bradbury's perennial little boy.

"Charley," I muttered, spilling coffee on the table. "I've lost my core-function."

"Don't worry, dear," he said from behind the funny paper. "It'll turn up." It was as simple as that.

After CC's breakfast, bidding Charley godspeed as he trundled off to his traditional economic function, eating my breakfast, washing up breakfast, dressing and changing CC, cleaning the bedrooms, washing the diapers, making pudding, hanging up the diapers, throwing away the old newspapers, emptying the ashtrays and waste baskets, changing CC, making CC's orange juice, sweeping the kitchen and dining room floors, and reading Lippmann, I spotted the mailman. The mailman is apt to come any time between 9:15 A.M. and 1 P.M. and I find this very upsetting. He doesn't fit into my schedule at all. And it's dreadfully nerve wracking wondering when he's going to show.

Anyhow, he brought numerous appeals for money from relatives, friends and total strangers, a coupon for ten cents off a pound of oleomargarine, a free tube of fluoridated toothpaste, an offer of money from a loan shark, an offer of cash from a real estate agent for the house we are renting, several announcements from Catholic book publishers of new books about Woman and Her Role, and The Commonweal.

After throwing away most of the mail, I was intrigued to see that The Commonweal, which I have long suspected of being Anti-Woman because so few women writers grace its pages with more than a nosegay or a passing book review, well, The Commonweal in its own humorless way had an article—"The Role of Woman" by Father John L. Thomas, S.J., [May 18]. And there it was, in black and white, all about the core-function. Certainly, I thought, a St. Louis Jesuit might well have something to say about the role of woman. Gratifyingly enough, he admitted that the discussion previously "has been cluttered up with numerous pat phrases." I liked this direct approach, especially when he went right down the line with "womb to tomb," "more than meets the eye," "traditional economic functions," "wife's socio-economic status," "her training for life," "childbearing and child rearing," "enrichment and development of her personality through motherhood," "not adequately prepared," "essential fulfillment of motherhood," "material symbols of success," "pursuit of happiness," "essential human values and integral personal fulfillment," "personal growth and enrichment," "most satisfying and significant human relationships." And,

as he puts it so well, "what has occasioned all the contemporary confusion?"

The heart of the matter is indeed, he says, the devaluation of the core-function. In other words, it seems, I had not really lost my core-function. It was just that nobody paid any attention to it, publicly, so it was up for grabs. Everybody, *deraciné*, was just waiting for society to define woman's status and roles. Now personally I'm not waiting around for society to rediscover the significance of the family in order that woman's role in the world will become clear. So I brushed the mourning doves off the window sill and went on about my business. But I *was* intrigued. I mused quite a bit.

When Charley came home from his traditional economic function, we exchanged traditional greetings. "Do anything today?" he asked.

"Not much. How about you?"

"Not much. Another day, another meeting. Boy, I'm tired. How about a drink?"

"Good. I'll make them."

"CC all right?"

"Fine. Took his shoelaces out five, six times. Got into the closet and tore up some boxes. Took the eyes off the teddy bear. Didn't eat anything for lunch. Cut his knee when he was pushing the crib around his room."

"Good kid."

"Sure is. How many onions?"

"Oh, three, four. Don't stint."

"The way he carries that blanket around all over, you'd think he reads *Peanuts*. Listen, today I had a good look at that bird, and you know what it is? A yellow-throat warbler! First time I've ever seen one. First time I've ever seen any warbler nesting around houses. It's beautiful. Has a black mask over its face—a 'domino.'"

"Quite a find, huh? Any other interesting tidbits today?"

"The House passed that fool DC transit bill and a committee put in a lot of crazy amendments to the foreign aid bill."

"Maybe they can change it in the Senate and the conference committees."

"I wish the Administration would quit reading *The True Believer* and latch on to *The Public Philosophy*. Even Congress could afford it now that it's out in a thirty-five cent edition."

"I don't know. They'd probably need at least another \$2,000 pay raise. It's difficult to make ends meet, especially in colonial Washington, you know. I used to think the famous Lost Colony was somewhere further south, but it seems to be right here among us."

"Talk about lost. I was reading this article in The Commonweal today about the role of woman and how she lost her core-function. I told you this morning

I had lost my core-function. See? I knew it all the time."

"I suppose it's this fragmentation you were talking to Marion about."

"Yes. She says she's been trying to lick it for years. You get torn between twenty-five inconsequential things that have to be done in passing, then when you do have five minutes, you can't pull yourself together. It's a perpetual point of no return."

"You're sweet. You women should divide yourselves into theoreticians and experimentalists, like us physicists. The field needs specialization."

"It's already been divided like that, but it's usually you men who are the theoreticians. This core-function worries me, though. You know I was the only one in my class in college who didn't take the required marriage course. Do you think that had anything to do with it? The kids always said that all the Monsignor ever told them was that marriage was a Sacrament. Nothing more, nothing less. Nothing, I guess. But maybe I should have taken it anyhow."

"What's for supper?"

"Oh, a crabmeat pie with that cheese sauce and a shrimp salad. So anyway, this Jesuit from St. Louis says women aren't trained for homemaking, just not prepared, you know. Personally, I don't know what *could* prepare one for it. I don't think it would have been such a hot idea to have studied three hours of diaper-folding years ago, and all that stupid home economics about vitamins. Studying the Renaissance was a lot more interesting. And I loathe sewing and I doubt if I could have been indoctrinated."

"Yes, it's really a matter of inclination and attitude. But I suppose you women want to feel wanted and need to be needed."

"That's exactly what he said. And of course that we're tied to your economic apron strings. And we can't do anything to help you in your work. Boy, you can make a lot more with your economic apron strings than I can with mine. That's one rather definite way society defines the role of woman—it gives women generally lower wages than men. And there's a terrific increase in the number of women who have families and relatives to support. If that isn't definition, I don't know what is. Do you want me to come down to the office and share your traditional economic function? God knows, that place needs dusting. I could at least do that."

FALL SPECIAL ISSUES

Fall Education	—	September 28
Fall Books	—	October 26
Children's Books	—	November 16
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"But, dear, don't you really long for the good old days of rural and small town America where you could do all you do now and also tend the livestock, pull the plow and can the garden? Our interests and activities wouldn't be so confined then."

"Yes, that's another thing he said. We have such a limited round of social events."

"Well, we could always throw a potlatch and invite the Hobbits and the Kwakiutls. That should be broadening. What happened in the ball games this afternoon?"

"Well, the only game played was Detroit and Baltimore. Detroit won and they're all neck and neck for the cellar. Cleveland's pitching Early Wynn against the poor old Nats tonight. You know, that translator of *Homo Ludens* had to put in a footnote that Huizinga, when he wrote about contemporary sports, had really no idea of organized sports as they are today. I don't know whether he'd think they've lost the play spirit or not. He seemed to think that competition like batting averages would still have the old play spirit. But I don't know what he'd think about television audiences."

"Who wants to think about television audiences?"

"Ha! And you know, another curious thing that showed up in the translator's footnotes was that in this quotation from the Book of Proverbs, the one they use in some of the Masses of the Blessed Virgin about 'The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his ways . . . and I was with him forming all things, and was delighted every day . . . playing before him . . . playing in the world,' you know. Well, the translator couldn't use the Protestant Bible translation for this, he had to use the Douay, because the English Protestant version doesn't bring out the idea of 'play' at all. Isn't that fascinating?"

"Say, that really is. I'll bet the old Puritans couldn't bear the idea of 'playing,' especially in the Bible. Hmmm. What do you think that is? Late Haydn or early Beethoven?"

"Put my money on late Haydn. But, listen, speaking of Puritans, this Jesuit can't stand the quotation 'Woman is made to love.' What do you think of that?"

"That *really* is *fraught*. You ought to quit reading this strange propaganda. Sounds like psychological warfare, or brainwashing, or something."

"I think it's really sociological warfare. Let them fight it out, huh? But say, things like this could break up families, couldn't they?"

"Certainly could. 'Eternal vigilance' and all that. 'Be kind to your fine feathered friends, for that duck may be somebody's mother.' I think we'd better let somebody else seek the Lost Core. We have better things to do. Let's eat."

"What did I tell you? It's late Haydn. Later than you think."

NORMA KRAUSE HERZFELD.

Contemporary Criticism in the Georgian Manner

BEYOND THE DREAMS OF AVARICE.
Russell Kirk. Regnery. \$4.50.

By FREDERICK D. WILHELSEN

MR. RUSSELL Kirk was described not long ago as a man who has made a career of irritating "all those who can read without moving their lips." This brittle remark was made in *The Reporter* by Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr. In the opening pages of his collection of essays, Kirk criticizes Schlesinger for this "serious misunderstanding" of his position. But the latter's charge seems to me to contain a truth whose irony escaped the man who made it.

Although it is certainly convenient that educated Western man can read without moving lips, it is also true that unless he move his lips when he reads great poetry, it will not speak to him; unless he read the finest prose of our English inheritance at least with the lips of the imagination, it will stand dumb before him. And it is also true that the splitting away from sight of sound, from poetry of song, from thought of life has helped produce that abstracted and rootless intelligentsia against whom Mr. Kirk has increasingly reacted throughout the last few years. In spite of all his careful distinctions, Kirk is still counted a member of this very intelligentsia. But "his heart is in the Highlands."

Crofters in the Hebrides, farmers in the stump country of Michigan, bankrupt landowners in Fife, retired colonels in London, country clergymen in York—men harassed and impoverished by the modern state, ridiculed and condemned by the modern mind—these and men like them have found in Russell Kirk a champion of their rights and a voice of their discontent. Kirk stands for hierarchy in government, for diversity in society, for piety in learning. This is what he means by Conservatism, by what I would call "The Party of Tradition." And this Party does speak for a community

of men and women who have been accustomed now for centuries to read with mind and lip.

Perhaps this points up the paradox of the career Kirk has chosen for himself. A spokesman for Anglo-American conservative values, he finds himself in an age wherein those values are on the decline in both Great Britain and the United States. He is read by an audience made up largely of people who have concluded that the freedom of man is subordinate to the arrow of history. History for his usual readers is best symbolized by the growth of modern industry in economics and the communitarian spirit in politics. History for these men has turned its back on both the substance and form of the aristocratic and familial order whose defense Kirk has made his own. It claims that the man of the future must perforce seek his salvation in a world given over to the pursuit of power, of a total power that seems to grow of itself as the century wears on. Faced against these modern commitments, the man of Kirk's persuasions and talents could lapse into disillusion and retirement as did Santayana; he could launch an already doomed and Quixotic movement as did Chesterton in Distributism; or he can proclaim himself as a social critic. Kirk has chosen the third role.

It promises to be a lively one. It is certainly a dedicated one. "If Things are to be thrust out of the saddle once more, and Man mounted (in Pico's phrase) to 'join battle as to the sound of a trumpet of war' on behalf of man's higher nature, then some of us must go barefoot through the world, like Pico, preaching against the vegetative and sensual errors of the time."

Beyond the Dreams of Avarice is presented by its author as "the random vaticinations of a social critic." Its matter is contemporary; its manner, Georgian. Its temper is that of a confident, even imperious reaction. Dividing his attention between "American Observations" and "Notes from Abroad," Kirk ranges

all the way from his familiar concern with "The Reform of American Conservatism and Liberalism," to "Ethical Labor," to descriptions of life in York and the Hebrides, to "Pico Della Mirandola and Human Dignity."

Continuing his now famous attack on liberalism, Kirk finds in Mr. David Riesman the type of a new American liberalism. "Prudence, at least in its lowest aspect, governs this liberalism, not ideology. There is no intention of creating a classless society, or a universal state, or an equalitarian monotony. If there is no appreciation of human dignity, still there is an understanding of the importance of individuality." Kirk finds it all "rather humdrum and compromising." Even American conservative thought as reflected in the severe and accurate prose of Mr. Clinton Rossiter fails—says Kirk—to face squarely "the ominous standardization, boredom, and the decay of taste reflected in *The Lonely Crowd*."

When commenting on American life today, Kirk seems at his best in "The Age of Discussion"—an analysis of the decline of the literate journal in America—and in "The Ethics of Censorship"—a penetrating judgment not only of official but also of the unofficial censorship exercised by publishing houses, universities, librarians and government officials. He judges this censorship to be directed more often against the friends of tradition and religion than against their enemies.

The author is weakest when he sweeps Bentham, Marx, Dewey, and Freud indiscriminately into his radical Inferno. This is not quite fair. Although the climate surrounding official Freudianism has been anti-Christian and depersonalizing, the weight of latter-day scholarship is against any essential link between the conclusions of psychoanalysis and the forces making for an impersonal world of broken men. Kirk is dead right when he states that the psychiatrist will never save us. But it is also true, as Karl Stern insists

in *The Third Revolution*, that depth psychology has positive value. When exercised with delicacy by a man sensitive to the mystery of human nature and the tragedy of illness, it is capable of bringing to light those archaic forces lying within the depths of every man, forces paradoxically linked with what Augustine and Aquinas called "the natural desire" of spirit and flesh for union with the common Father. Eminently concrete, fully being, those archaic forces surge forth from the veiled center of the psyche to reach beyond the artificial and abstract world modern man has built around him. They speak to the heart of Love and Death and God. I develop this issue simply because I think Kirk could string Freud to his own bow.

Kirk's "Notes From Abroad" reveal him as a man of an essentially poetic temper. Until his critics can firmly grasp this quality they will never understand him. It misses the mark to attack him, as he has been attacked, for trying to conjure up an American Tory tradition that never existed. The real question in weigh-

ing Kirk's thought is why a conservative tradition does appeal to him. What does he see in it that has made him the kind of man he is? To answer this question we must follow his mind and his imagination as he describes "a soft country of old estates, old names, old ways—dyked fields amid which the conical haystacks cluster like African huts, brown monastic ruins, seventeenth-century lairds' houses." These are the things Russell Kirk knows and he loves them. He has seen the top soil ripped off the best land in England; he has seen venerable communities disappear to be supplanted by the dreary wilderness of the New Towns. He has seen the roofs go off the grand houses of Britain; he has stumbled through the decay of what was once Melville House and watched its three-hundred year life dissolve under the auctioneer's gavel.

For such a man, loving the things he knows, the only reaction to the impersonal world of the mass state can be one of contempt and defiance. Perhaps this is why Kirk is so fond of Roy Campbell, "The Last of the Scalds."

There is a test, I think, by which Kirk's achievement and influence can be measured. Imagine our having been told five years ago that a man who writes casually of the regiments which were opposed at Killiecrankie, who recounts with relish the legends of the Clanranolds, who models his style on the periods of Burke—imagine our having been told that this man would rise up as a leading figure in American letters in the Atomic Age. That it happened at all speaks well for the toughness of the tradition Mr. Kirk has championed and made his own.

Udomo, from exile to power in his native country, Panafrica. Set at some future date, when the rule of the white man has become the black man's intolerable burden, the book opens with Udomo in England, where he is sharing with other exiles the dreams of the future and the indigence of the present. The politics of Africa are gone over in great detail as the exiles attend conferences on colonial affairs to challenge the complacent and comfortable "progress reports" of colonial officials. The exiles also execute a series of sexual vagaries with some English girls which nearly wrecks the chances of the novel being considered a serious work.

It is not, in fact, until the young Udomo sails for Africa that the story shakes off its sex-and-Soho pompon and begins to deepen into an intensely interesting, beautifully written work. The scenes of modern Africa presented by Mr. Abrahams are fascinating glimpses of one of the last frontiers of modern civilization.

The author ignores almost entirely the political facts of Udomo's rise to power. This would be a crippling omission in the biography of even a fictional political leader in most circumstances. But Mr. Abrahams has given something better than politics. The aching desire of the Dark Continent peoples for independence is the book's dominant theme, and we are presented with the almost forgotten human facts behind the turbulence and terror of African life. Mr. Abrahams presents the white man's argument for his loitering presence in Africa, but stacked against it are centuries of

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A Last Frontier

A WREATH FOR UDOMO. By Peter Abrahams. Knopf. \$3.95.

By JAMES GREENE

PETER Abrahams' latest novel follows the career of a young African revolutionary, Michael

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exploitation, subjugation and oppression.

Udomo, with the assistance of a wealthy native, manages to achieve a bloodless revolution in Panafrica. At the end of it he is elected Prime Minister. At this point Udomo finds that the greater part of his task still lies before him. "Our country has three enemies," he explains. "First there is the white man. Then there is poverty. And then there is the past."

In the hopes of eliminating poverty, Udomo begins doing business with the white man, to speed the industrialization of Panafrica. But the price he must pay for the cooperation of the whites is a personal betrayal of his close friends. After a great deal of soul-searching, Udomo commits the act of betrayal in the name of Panafrican progress.

The native population, in a tribal rite described in great detail, assassinates Udomo for his departure from the tribal law of loyalty and his pacts with the whites.

Abrahams has the crisp, tense style of a good reporter. But he also

has the eye of an artist. His minor characters, especially, are finely drawn. Mhendi, who is betrayed by Udomo, is more eloquent in failure than Udomo in his long series of successes. Selina, the native woman whose funds oil Udomo's path to greatness, has a cunning that is made singularly believable by Abrahams.

Udomo's dilemma in choosing between personal loyalty and progress is a common enough one, and far from rare in the lives of political leaders. He is made ruthless by his vision of a brave and black new world for his country. That is a brand of ruthlessness that has informed and directed some of the sorrier episodes of modern history. It is a noble vision in almost every case, deserving better prologue than betrayals and the general suspension of human motives and demands that it often receives.

Udomo could not hurry history, even by sacrificing his personal friends. But he does manage to present to us some of the sorry consequences of its tardiness.

Literary Wars

THE RAVEN AND THE WHALE. By Perry Miller. Harcourt, Brace. \$6.75.

By HENRY POPKIN

WE ALL know those films in which animated costume-dummies inform us confidentially, "That shiftless Abe Lincoln will never amount to a hill of beans," or assure us the *status quo* will survive, "A revolution in Holy Russia? Never!" or simply ask, "What was the name of that guy we burned at the stake . . . Something-arola?" The main figures of *The Raven and the Whale* inadvertently demonstrate the reality of such statements. These men, Lewis Gaylord Clark and Evert Duyckinck, the most influential editors and critics of their day, managed between them to take every possible wrong attitude toward their literary contemporaries.

Perry Miller's book records in full detail the literary life of New York in the 1840's, with some account of the years preceding and

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following. Its pages are devoted to the pride, passion, and industry of a herd of self-important hacks. Herman Melville wanders through these noisy, squalid activities and finally wanders out, retiring to the relative quiet of the custom house. Poe enters the literary wars and falls a victim to both sides. Hawthorne, Whitman, Emerson, and Thoreau have the good fortune to remain, for the most part, off-stage voices.

The great adversaries — but “great” is very inexact—are Clark, editor of the *Knickerbocker*, conservative, elegant, and a Whig, and Duyckinck, editor of *Arcturus* and other periodicals, a little more radical, a little more spirited, and a Democrat. The differences over which they fought were primarily matters of emphasis. Both fostered a sort of literary nationalism, but Duyckinck made more noise about it.

Genuine reflectiveness could stir either of these men to anger or annoyance; this odd prejudice seems to explain their critical incompetence. Clark liked urbane, glossy essayists like Lamb, Irving, and Dr. Holmes and wholesome poets like Longfellow. Duyckinck was less certain what he liked, but he agreed that men who insisted on weighing accepted values for themselves were un-American. Emerson was suspect as a religious heretic; Duyckinck took Melville to task for finding him “a great man.” Thoreau was regarded as promising until he wrote *Walden*, and then Duyckinck gave up hope. Hawthorne was satisfactory as long as the New York literati could persuade themselves that he was as light a lightweight as they were.

The raven and the whale of the title constitute special problems, because both of them belonged for a while to this world. Since Poe and Melville worked for Duyckinck, that fact alone guaranteed Clark's lack of enthusiasm for their writing. Duyckinck was indifferent to Melville when his publisher accepted *Typee*. Apparently regarding Melville as a mere chronicler, he defended the novel on the grounds of its veracity. As he warmed to the novelist, he let fall the characteristically imper-

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ceptive remark that Melville "models his writing evidently a great deal on Washington Irving." *Moby Dick* and *Pierre* made it clear that he had backed the wrong horse; Melville returned the compliment by caricaturing Duyckinck in *Pierre*. The poor man had a hard life; he would encourage a promising writer, and then he would get no more than a *Walden* or a *Moby Dick* for his pains.

What purpose, then, is served by all the detail that has gone into *The Raven and the Whale*? A case can be made—and Miller works furiously at making it—for the significant effect of this milieu upon Melville. Miller presents his case by inserting parenthetical, often exclamatory reminders of the numerous points of contact between the literati and Melville—the chowder controversy, the frequent references to Ishmael, an account in Clark's *Knickerbocker* of a white whale, and the rhapsodizing, allegorizing tendencies Duyckinck encouraged in his quest for a nationalist literature.

But this book is also an object lesson in the nature of literary journalism. The literary journalist, committed to regular communication with a large general audience, inevitably becomes a partisan of the harmless, the predictable, and the mediocre. He can not for the life of him tell—or, at least, Duyckinck could not—who might be great. It might turn out to be the most exasperating and indecorous of non-conformists. Need we be reminded that, not so long ago, Proust was charged with causing the fall of France, that Faulkner was a figure of fun, that Eliot was continually being exposed as a fraud? Except in a few outlying districts, all three are now as well established as the Genius of the past. Duyckinck's successors have missed again.

REVIEWERS

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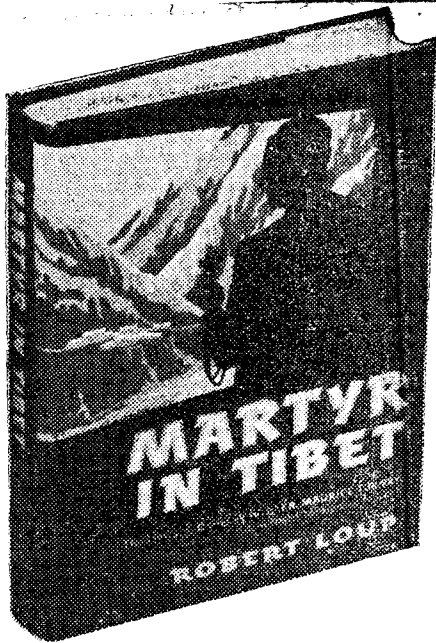
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